

# OPINION

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## OUR VIEW

# See something, say something

It doesn't take a medical degree to do CPR, and that's the point.

If only surgeons and doctors knew how to help the victim of a heart attack, many more people would die of heart attacks. In the 1970s, Tacoma, Washington led the way in training ordinary U.S. citizens to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Countless lives have been saved as a result of widespread knowledge of CPR.

Because nearly one in five Americans are trained to see the signs of cardiac arrest, resuscitate the victim and call in trained professionals to take over care, everyone around them is safer. Same goes for basic first aid and the Heimlich maneuver.

But when it comes to mental health care, we don't have the same attitude. Too many people feel unprepared to step into someone else's psychotic breakdown or depression or capable of administering life-saving measures that don't involve chest compressions. And even if they're

willing, they may worry they won't have the right words.

But just like in a heart attack, providing aid doesn't mean solving the problem. It means administering the necessary help until the victim can get complete treatment from a professional.

That's the idea behind QPR (question, persuade and refer) training, which some county health departments around Oregon have been offering. If more people take on the role of "gatekeepers," trained to recognize and respond to those suffer-

ing a mental health crisis or having suicidal thoughts, we will create a network of support that will decrease the number of suicides.

It's a three-step process of questioning, persuading and referring.

The first step is to be frank and direct, especially about suicide. One Oregon prevention education specialist recently explained that you can't plant the idea of suicide in someone's mind by talking about it. Either they are or they aren't considering it, and by

bringing it to the open you are bringing it out from the dark.

The signs might not be obvious, but if someone exhibits sudden shifts in demeanor or mood, talks about what life would be like if they were gone or shows an interest in getting rid of personal belongings, it's a good time to broach the subject.

The next step is to persuade — to explain that help is available and that their life is important to you and others. It's important to speak in positive terms, and not demean the person for considering suicide.

The last step is refer — knowing where to get the person the help they need. See the "who to call" sidebar for some numbers to call for immediate help.

For more information on suicide prevention, call Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare at 503-325-5722. The 24-hour crisis line is 503-325-5724.

Routine QPR training would be an excellent idea in every corner of Oregon.

## WHO TO CALL

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-8255
- **Spanish Language National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-888-628-9454
- **SafeOregon reporting line:** 844-472-3367
- **Crisis Text Line:** 741741
- **Military Helpline:** 888-457-4838 or text MIL1 to 839863
- **Alcohol and Drug Helpline:** 800-923-4357 or text RecoveryNow to 839863
- **OregonYouthLine.org:** 1-877-968-8491 or text "teen2teen" to 839863
- **The Trevor Project (for LGBTQ youth):** 1-866-4-U-TREVOR
- **Native Youth Crisis Hotline:** 1-877-209-1266

## SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

# Where ukuleles fly off the shelves

Only in Cannon Beach would a music store move its stock by pushing a piano down the street.

Michael Corry of Michael's Music had a little help from his friends — among them city manager Bruce St. Denis, a guitarist — last month as he moved inventory from his Sunset Boulevard location to a new spot on South Hemlock.

Corry, a professional musician most of his life, is best known locally as a teacher, performer, studio engineer and shop owner.



**R.J. MARX**

He's originally from Santa Monica, California, and played in garage bands from the age of 11. After graduation, he continued his love of music, with a year at Mount St. Mary's Conservatory.

His interest in world music beckoned, and he considered studying in Hawaii with the great guitarist Gabby Pahinui.

"I thought about going to Hawaii and knocking on his door but I didn't have enough money to get to Hawaii," Corry recalled. "I thought about going to Mexico and playing in a mariachi band because I liked that, too. Then I heard about the Ali Akbar Khan School in San Francisco. It was the easiest to get to from Santa Monica."

It was there Corry studied with the great Indian musician and sarod master.

"I went there just to learn a few more licks on guitar," Corry said. "I was only going to stay for the summer. I got hooked — I was there four years."

Corry specialized in the sarod, an Indian stringed instrument with a goat-skin resonator.

"You're actually playing with your finger and your fingernail at the same time," he explained. "I used to practice so much that my fingernails wore back until I was bleeding."

After leaving San Francisco, Corry went on the road "for a lot of years" before settling in the Lewiston-Clarkston area of Idaho.

He raised a family and opened a music store, living and working there for more than two decades. When his father died, he took a vacation to Cannon Beach.

"I was sitting at what used to be Dooger's — now Pelican — and looking at that building and thought: 'That would be a nice place to have a music shop.' I thought it would cost so much to have a shop there. But I went and talked to the landlady and the price was pretty good."

In October 2001, Michael's Music opened its doors. It was a hit right away, Corry said.

"The store was really supported by the locals. A lot of businesses will open during the summer because they're tourist-oriented, but I wanted to open during the offseason so people knew I



Cannon Beach Music

Michael Corry and Daron Patton move a piano to Michael's Music.



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

Michael Corry of Michael's Music at his new location.

was supporting the locals."

During the economic downturn, he fought skin cancer. "I had to keep working," he said. "The doctor told me it's \$1 million to build a nose and it doesn't

always work."

Corry said he is not in pain and breathes better. "I keep getting things cut off, here, and on my back. It doesn't even hardly hurt."

## A building change

In December, Corry's landlord asked him if he would be interested in renting the nearby Hemlock location. "This happened real quick," he said. "I think if I had thought about it I would have chickened out. It just about killed me. But this is a much better location. It's cleaner, I can be more organized and I get a lot of foot traffic."

As in the old location, he teaches more than 20 students of all ages at all skill levels. He says he loves teaching, from beginning students to advanced, and adults returning to music.

Corry said unlike other methods, he teaches students to play music right off. Corry gets students playing "real songs" right away, "not kiddie songs and dumb-down stuff."

The method works, he said. "I've got people I've turned into pros. But I'm happy to sit on the beach and play Jack Johnson stuff. I've taught all the way from ages 3 to 87. The love never goes away."

Corry plays in the group Blue Jug and manages a recording studio where he plays backup on projects from the Beatles to Beethoven — literally. He recently performed on a recording of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony where he played piano, bass and guitar.

As a songwriter and lyricist, Corry uses local themes. "I did an album called 'Codger Pole,'" he said. "It's a place over in Colfax, Washington, I used a lot of local references."

His song "Little Bird of Falcon Cove" employs a Hawaiian motif, a carryover from his longtime love of world music. But as much as he looks outward, he keeps his heart close to home.

"Mourning Dove" was written in the aftermath of the death of 2-year-old Isabella Smith, murdered by her mother Jessica Smith in a Cannon Beach hotel room in July 2014.

"The whole story of 'Mourning Dove' was really about the little girl who died trying to figure out what happened. She's stuck in between purgatory. That incident had a great impact — there were some kind of spiritual things going on with it. I was already working on the song and there was this mourning dove singing outside. Then the little girl died and the bird was gone. I thought, that's what this song's about. It was such a difficult time."

So far, the store's 1347 S. Hemlock St. location has proved a winner for Corry, with new customers and stock. Ukuleles are flying off the shelves, he added. Other hot sellers are guitars, sheet music and books.

Corry is trying to provide services for what "everybody needs," he said. "I repair all instruments. If it's out of my league, I've got some better guys who know what they're doing."

R.J. Marx is The Daily Astorian's South County reporter and editor of the Seaside Signal and Cannon Beach Gazette.